



Attorney General Jon Bruning

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# News Release

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## **Google to Pay Nebraska Nearly \$250K in Consumer Tracking Settlement**

LINCOLN - Attorney General Jon Bruning announced today that his office, along with 36 states and the District of Columbia, entered into a settlement with Google Inc. for tracking information on Apple's Safari web browser.

"Privacy is paramount," said Bruning. "If a business improperly intrudes on consumers' privacy, the Attorney General's Office will pursue them."

The states alleged Google used programming to fool Apple's Safari browser on mobile phones and computers to allow tracking of online activity.

Google operates the most popular Internet search engine and generates revenue primarily through advertising. Through its advertising platform, Google sets third-party trackers, or *cookies*, to track browsing history. Normally, Safari blocks these cookies.

From June 1, 2011 until February 15, 2012, Google altered its coding to circumvent the default privacy settings on Safari without consumers' knowledge or consent. This coding enabled Google to set cookies on consumers' browsers. Google disabled this coding method in February 2012.

In order to resolve the allegations, Google will pay the states \$17 million and has agreed to injunctive relief that requires further compliance with consumer protection laws.

Also included in the settlement were: Maryland, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Vermont, Washington, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, District of Columbia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Nebraska will receive \$247,850 to be deposited into the State Settlement Fund.

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